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TAGS: PGOV PREL PTER PK

SUBJECT: SINDH ASSEMBLY ASKS MUSHARRAF TO ACCEPT ELECTORAL COLLEGE DECISION

Classified By: Classified by Consul General Kay Anske for reasons 1.4 b and d

¶1. (C) Summary: In a move spearheaded by the Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP), the Sindh Provincial Assembly voted 94) 0 on August 13 to ask President Pervez Musharraf to agree to resign or face impeachment if he fails to win a vote of confidence on his re-election from his electoral college (all four provincial assemblies, the Senate and the National Assembly). Members of the Muttahida Quami Movement (MQM) party, long-time Musharraf allies who rule Sindh in coalition with the PPP, did not come to the Assembly for the vote. Members of the opposition in the 168-seat legislative body did not participate in the vote, although they were present in the Assembly building. This and the other non-binding resolutions from all four provinces were designed to pressure Musharraf to resign rather than face impeachment. End summary.

¶2. (SBU) On August 14, Speaker of the Sindh Provincial Assembly Nisar Khuhro (PPP) confirmed to the Consul General (CG) that, on August 13, the Sindh Assembly unanimously adopted (94) 0) a resolution, spearheaded by the majority Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP), that calls for President Pervez Musharraf to seek a vote of confidence on his re-election from his electoral college (all four provincial assemblies, the Senate and the National Assembly). Should he fail to win a vote of confidence, the resolution stated, Musharraf should resign or face impeachment.

¶3. (SBU) Members of the Muttahida Quami Movement (MQM) political party, a member of the ruling Sindh coalition and traditional allies of Musharraf, were not physically present at the Assembly building for the vote. Members of opposition parties such as the Pakistan Muslim League (PML) and the National People's Party (NPP) did not attend the session, but were otherwise present at the Assembly building.

¶4. (C) Minister for Youth Affairs and MQM Provincial Assembly member Faisal Sabzwari told PolOff on August 15 that his party decided that not showing up at the Assembly building was the best option. He recounted that MQM was a member of Musharraf's government. To turn course and act against him, he said, would risk alienating many of MQM's core supporters. On the other hand, taking a public position in opposition to the PPP would risk the viability of the province's coalition government, of which MQM is the junior partner. Speaker Khuhro told the CG that he admired the

deftness of MQM's political maneuvering on this issue.
Anske